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#1
SECRET WARS
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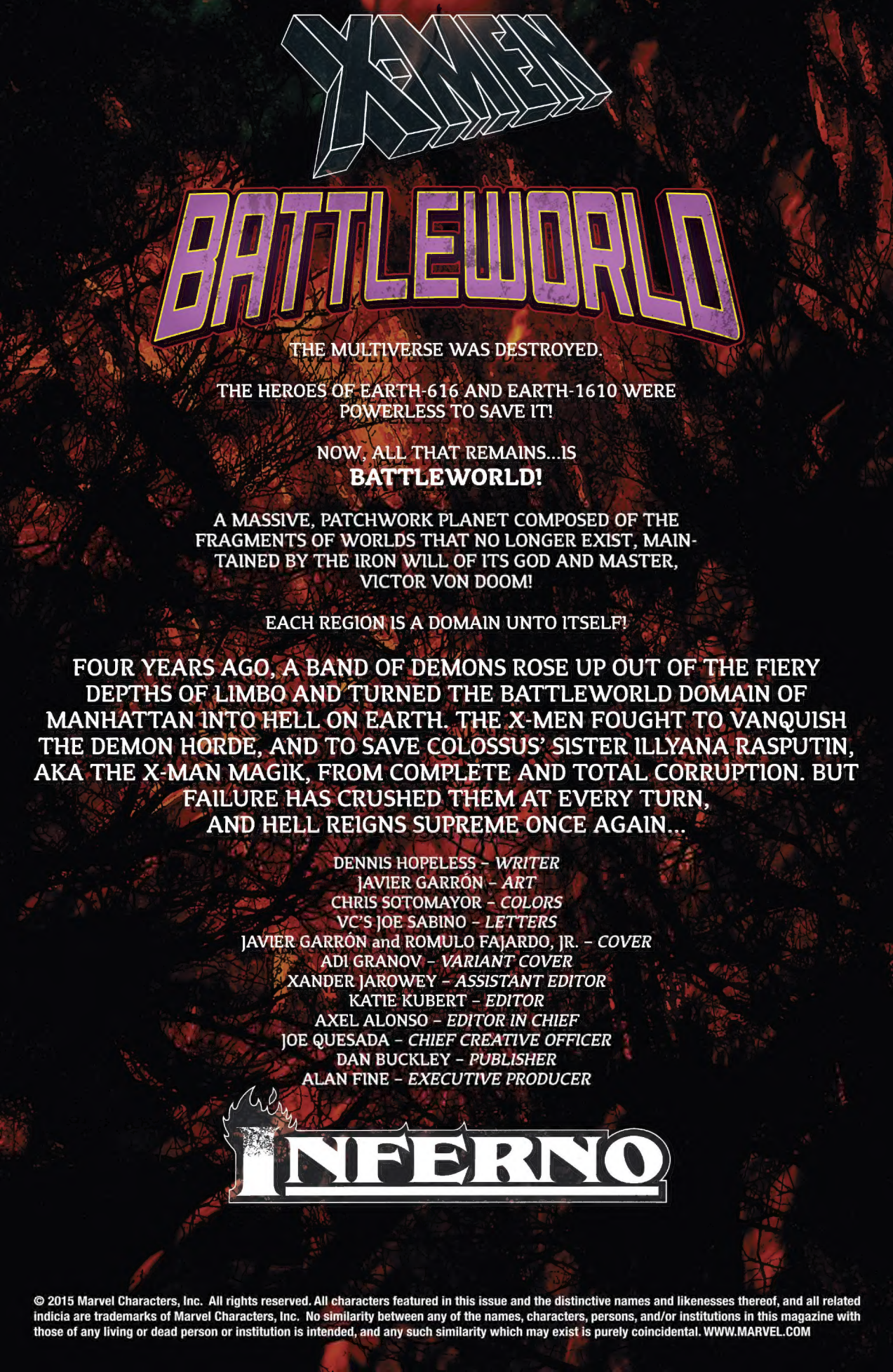
SECRET WARS


X-MEN
BATTLEWORLD
THE MULTIVERSE WAS DESTROYED.
THE HEROES OF EARTH-616 AND EARTH-1610 WERE POWERLESS TO SAVE IT!
NOW, ALL THAT REMAINS...IS
BATTLEWORLD!
A MASSIVE, PATCHWORK PLANET COMPOSED OF THE FRAGMENTS OF WORLDS THAT NO LONGER EXIST, MAINTAINED BY THE IRON WILL OF ITS GOD AND MASTER, VICTOR VON DOOM!
EACH REGION IS A DOMAIN UNTO ITSELF!
FOUR YEARS AGO, A BAND OF DEMONS ROSE UP OUT OF THE FIERY DEPTHS OF LIMBO AND TURNED THE BATTLEWORLD DOMAIN OF MANHATTAN INTO HELL ON EARTH. THE X-MEN FOUGHT TO VANQUISH THE DEMON HORDE, AND TO SAVE COLOSSUS' SISTER ILLYANA RASPUTIN, AKA THE X-MAN MAGIK, FROM COMPLETE AND TOTAL CORRUPTION. BUT FAILURE HAS CRUSHED THEM AT EVERY TURN, AND HELL REIGNS SUPREME ONCE AGAIN...
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FOUR YEARS AGO TODAY, THE DEMONS WON.
LIMBO HAS BROKEN LOOSE IN MANHATTAN, TWISTING THE GREAT CITY INTO A DARK, EVIL THING.
THE X-MEN FOUGHT THE DEMON HORDE WITH EVERYTHING WE HAD.
BUT THE X-MEN FAILED.
MY YOUNGER SISTER ILLYANA HAS BEEN INFERNO'S PRISONER EVER SINCE.
TAKEN BY THE HELLSPAWN N'ASTIRH AND LOCKED AWAY ATOP WHAT WAS ONCE THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDING.
LEFT FOR DEAD WHEN WE RETREATED ACROSS THE RIVER.
LOCKED BEHIND THE WALL THEY BUILT TO KEEP THE INFERNO CONTAINED.
NO ONE GOES IN AND NOTHING COMES OUT.
BUT SCOTT SUMMERS AND I STRUCK A DEAL.
I WOULD BOTTLE MY RAGE DEEP DOWN. I WOULD POLICE THE OUTER BOROUGHS AS HIS OBEDIENT X-MAN EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR SAVE ONE. AND ON THAT DAY--
INFERNO: YEAR FOUR. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING.
--THIS DAY, THE ANNIVERSARY OF OUR RETREAT--
--I WOULD LEAD A TEAM INTO THE INFERNO--
--TO BRING MY SISTER HOME.

THREE ATTEMPTS. THREE *FAILURES.*

BUT THIS IS THE CLOSEST WE HAVE EVER COME TO RESCUING HER.

ILLYANA IS JUST THROUGH THOSE DOORS.

AND I WILL NOT BE LEAVING *WITHOUT* HER.

MIND YOUR *MANNERS*, BROTHER RUSSIA.

COULDN'T GIVE US A LITTLE *KNOCK?*

AGGGHH!

N'ASTIRH--SILVER-TONGUED DEMON LORD.

SHOMP

WHAT IF WE'D BEEN IN OUR *UNDERTHINGS?!*

I WILL *KILL* YOU, DEMON!

SCOTT, *LOOK!*

I SEE IT, JEAN. CAN YOU GET ME OVER THERE?

YOU KNOW IT.

KA-ZAT

HEY, NOW!

YOU ALL RIGHT, COLOSSUS?

I WILL LIVE.

WHEN ARE YOU GONNA GET IT THROUGH YOUR IRON SKULL?

HOW MANY OF YOUR *FRIENDS--*

SCOTT!

--DO I HAVE TO BREAK?!
NO!
BEFORE YOU LET IT GO?!
ARGGHH!
SCOTT!
FOOOM
SCOTT'S SACRIFICE BROUGHT JEAN'S FLAME.
I FEAR FOR MY FRIENDS...

...BUT THEY'VE GIVEN ME MY OPENING.
AT LONG LAST, THIS IS MY CHANCE TO SAVE--
ILLYANA?
ILLYANA!
I MADE IT, SNOWFLAKE.
IT TOOK EVERYTHING, BUT YOUR BROTHER IS HERE AND I WILL NEVER...
...SISTER?
IT'S ME, ILLYANA.
IT'S PIOTR.
I SEE YOU, BROTHER.
I SEE YOU JUST FINE.
THE QUESTION IS...
HRRK
SQUNCH

...WILL THIS BE ENOUGH FOR YOU TO SEE ME?!
DARKCHILD--- ILLYANA RASPUTIN'S DEMON FORM, RULER OF INFERNO.
NAAAARRGHHH!

364 DAYS LATER.
6:00 AM
YAWWWN
PETE-- HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN UP?
A LITTLE WHILE.
SHE DEVIL
6:01 AM
JUST ONE MORE DAY, HUH?
YES, DOMINO. TOMORROW.
WELL THEN, LET'S MAKE IT A GOOD ONE.
6:13 AM
SUHHHHHHWWWWRRR
6:48 AM
I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU TORTURE YOURSELF, KEEPING THAT STUFF.
HMPH.
WE COULD PUT A LITTLE GYM IN THERE.
OR A GUEST ROOM.
NO.
7:23 AM
STAY WITH ME TODAY, BABE.
I'M WITH YOU.
NO, YOU'RE NOT. BUT I NEED YOU TO GET THERE.

11:45 AM
WEEOOOWEEOOO
1:19 PM
THUNK
HUARK!
YOU'RE THE FIREPROOF ONE, PETE. WHY THE HELL DO I ALWAYS HAVE TO DO THE CHASING?
YOU RUN FASTER.
5:32 PM
TO ONE MORE BOOGIE IN THE FLAMING PIT.
BUT THIS TIME WE'RE BRINGING THAT GIRL HOME. RIGHT, DOM?
I'LL DRINK TO THAT, BOOM BOOM.
CHEERS.
11:11 PM
3:00 AM

INFERNO: YEAR FIVE.
X-HEADQUARTERS.
EVER NOTICE HOW YOU KINDA STOP SEEING THE DARK AND DIRTY DEVIL DOME--
--JUST, LIKE, MELTS INTO THE BACKGROUND UNLESS YOU'RE STRAIGHT UP PEEPING IT?
I ALWAYS SEE IT, BOOM.
SO, TELL ME AGAIN HOW THIS WILL GO, EXACTLY...
X-MUSAK IS THE BEXT MUSAK.
WE USUALLY DO A QUICK BRIEFING WITH THIS YEAR'S TEAM. MAKE ANY ADJUSTMENTS TO THE PLAN BASED ON POWER SETS.
MAGIC AND SCIENCE. TOGETHER AT LAST!
AN UNHOLY BLANKET FORT THAT KEEPS THE GHOULIES OUT. KEEP IT UP, GUYS!
THEN GO OVER ANY MAJOR CHANGES TO THE MAP. NIGHTCRAWLER PICKS A DROP ZONE AND WE PORT IN.
SIMPLE ENOUGH.
BUT FIRST THINGS FIRST, WE GET TO FIND OUT--

--WHAT KIND OF ANTI-DEMON GEAR BEAST AND HIS SCIENCE TEAM HAVE COOKED UP THIS YEAR.
COOL.
LET'S SEE IT, HANKY PANK.
RIGHT... ACTUALLY...
WHERE IS MY GEAR, HANK?
PETER, WHY DON'T WE--
WHO ARE MY X-MEN? WHERE IS THIS YEAR'S TEAM?
MAYBE IT'S A TINY TEAM FULL OF LITTLE ANT-MANS?
I'M AFRAID THERE ISN'T GOING TO BE A TEAM THIS YEAR.
IT'S OVER, PETER.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, OVER, SCOTT?
I MEAN THIS HAS TO STOP. I UNDERSTAND YOU WANT ILLYANA BACK. WE ALL UNDERSTAND.
BUT IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO ACCEPT THAT IT'S NEVER--
WHO ARE YOU TO DECIDE WHAT WILL AND WON'T HAPPEN?
AS THE BARON OF THIS DOMAIN, I DECIDE WHO GOES INTO MANHATTAN. YOUR PASS HAS BEEN REVOKED.
WE HAVE A DEAL!

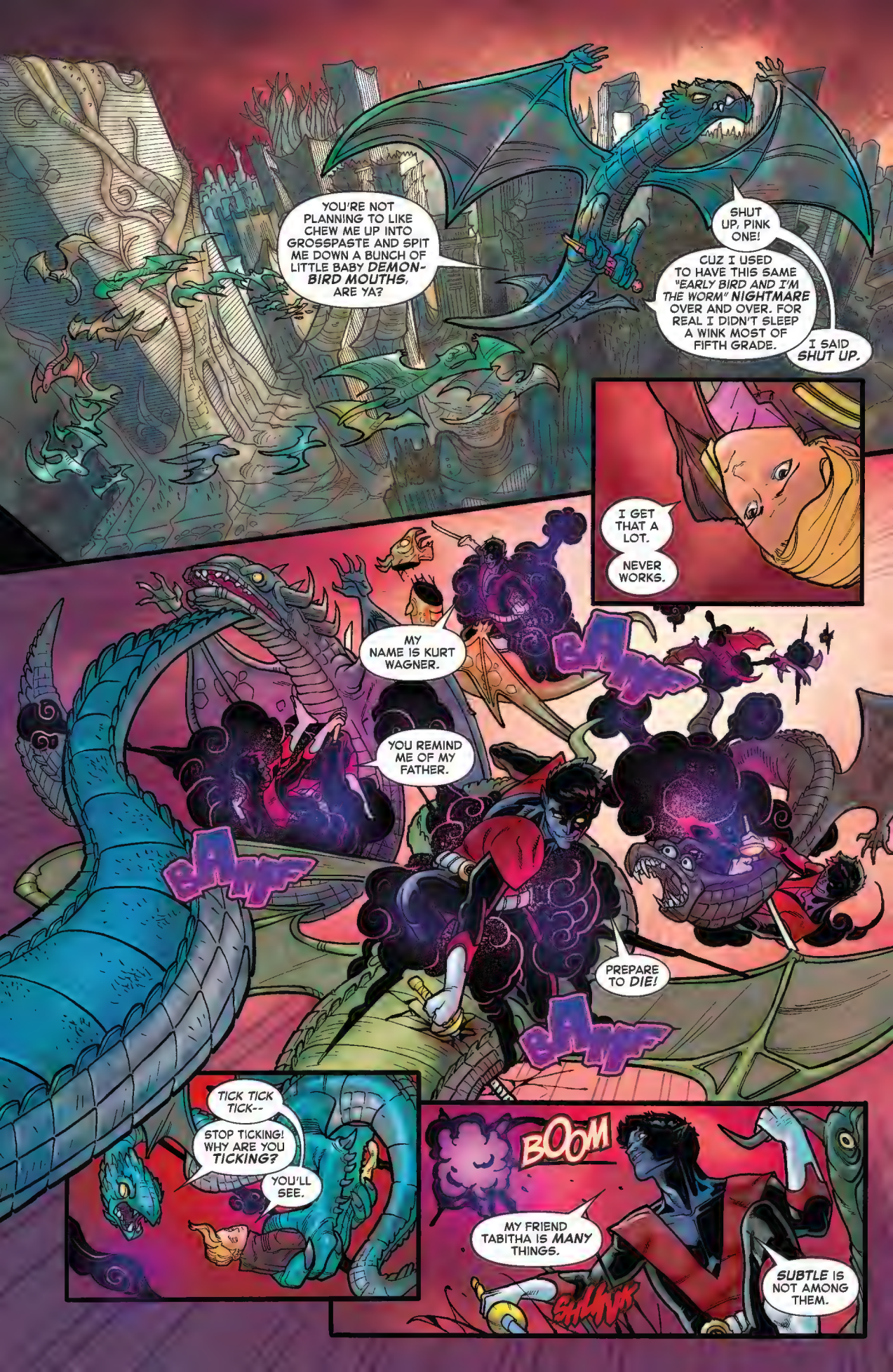
I WORK FOR YOU ALL YEAR IN EXCHANGE FOR THIS!
YOU GET PAID TO KEEP THE PEACE, PETER. JUST LIKE EVERYONE ELSE.
YOU'D TAKE IT AWAY NOW, SCOTT? AFTER LAST YEAR? AFTER WE CAME SO CLOSE?!
CAME CLOSE?! WOULD YOU LISTEN TO YOURSELF?!
LAST YEAR YOU GOT YOUR ANSWER ALONG WITH THAT ARM. I GOT THIS CHAIR!
ILLYANA IS LOST. I'M NOT THROWING ANY MORE MUTANTS INTO THE FIRE SO YOU CAN PRETEND YOU DON'T ALREADY KNOW IT.
GAAAH!
SCREAM ALL YOU LIKE. I'M NOT LETTING YOU IN THERE.
YOU GAVE A FRIEND YOUR WORD, SCOTT.
WOULD YOU TRULY BREAK IT SO EASILY?
KURT'S RIGHT. WE MADE HIM A DEAL. RENEGING AT THE LAST MINUTE WOULDN'T BE RIGHT.
BUT THIS HAS TO BE THE LAST TRIP. IT'S GOTTEN BEYOND DANGEROUS IN THERE.
FINE. GO. BUT DON'T THINK I'M SENDING A TEAM IN THERE TO BURN WITH YOU.
I WILL GO ALONE IF I HAVE TO.
YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE ALONE. I'M RIGHT HERE. KURT'S STILL WITH US. RIGHT, KURT?
HOW ELSE WOULD YOU GET THROUGH THE FORCE FIELD?
BESIDES, I NEVER PASS UP A CHANCE TO SLAY A FEW DEMONS.
WELL ALL RIGHT THEN, PEEPS.
LET'S GO DO THE DAMNED THING.
ARE YOU COOL?
CUCUMBER COOL. YOU ZUCCHINI.

LATER.
WHOA...
RIGHT? YA NEVER GET USED TO SEEING THAT.
WOULD YOU WANT TO?
NO.
SEEMS TO ME OUR BEST CHANCE OF SUCCESS WITH A TEAM THIS SMALL IS THE QUICKNESS. SMASH. GRAB. ROLL WITH WHAT COMES.
EMPIRE STATE BUILDING'S STRAIGHT AHEAD, ELF. PORT US ON UP AND LET'S DO THIS THING.
UM, DOMINO...?
"UM"? WHAT "UM"?
SAYONARA, BABY!
THE BUILDING IS A LIVING THING. MUCH LIKE THE INFERNO ITSELF. ALWAYS GROWING AND CHANGING.
IT WOULDN'T BE AT ALL SAFE TO TELEPORT US IN.
SO, WHAT, WE JUST WALK?
WE CAN RUN IF YOU'D LIKE.
AND YOU DIDN'T THINK TO MENTION THIS WRINKLE IN THE STRATEGY MEETINGS?
I...DIDN'T REALIZE THOSE WERE STRATEGY MEETINGS.
WHAT?!
WE WERE TALKING...OVER DINNER. WE ALWAYS...
YOU AGREED WITH THE STRATEGY.
I STILL DO. IN THEORY.
IN THEORY?!
YES. IF IT WERE POSSIBLE TO TELEPORT DIRECTLY INTO THE TOWER, THAT WOULD BE THE WAY TO GO.
IT'S LIKE WATCHING THE WORLD'S WEIRDEST SITCOM.
DON'T BE RUDE, FRAULEIN. THAT'S NONE OF OUR BUSINESS.
THEN MAYBE THEY SHOULDN'T BE SHOUTING IT.
PERHAPS NOT.
LOOK ALIVE, X-MEN.
WE'VE GOT INCOMING.
I'M GONNA DROP THIS NOW, PETE.

BECAUSE I LOVE YA, AND THOSE DEMONS REQUIRE SOME NEW FACE HOLES.
BUT I'M GONNA NEED A VERBAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF MY RIGHTNESS.
THANK YOU.
YOU ARE RIGHT, NEENA. I'M SORRY I WASN'T CLEAR.
YOU GUYS ARE SO SWEET IT'S TURNING MY SPIT PRETTY COLORS.
LOOK AT YOU GO, KURT.
HERE I THOUGHT YOU WERE JUST OUR EXIT STRATEGY.
I CHOOSE TO TAKE THAT AS A COMPLIMENT.
YOU SHOULD.
DIE, HELLBEAST!
TICK TICK TICK--
BOOM
DAMN RIGHT, BOOM.
UM...

...GUYS?!
HANDS OFF, KNUCKLES!
YOU PUT ME DOW--
--ACTUALLY, SCRITCHY SCRATCH THAT.
UP.
UP IS LOOKING REAL NICE.
BOOMER!
NOT TO WORRY, NEENA.
I'LL GET HER.

BLAM
WELL, BOYFRIEND...
...WHAT DO YOU THINK?
I THINK...THERE MIGHT BE A REASON THAT WAS TOO EASY.
WHICH IS A SHAME BECAUSE YOU WERE RIGHT.
ABOUT WHAT?
ABOUT KURT BEING OUR EXIT STRATEGY.
OH.


YOU'RE NOT PLANNING TO LIKE CHEW ME UP INTO GROSSPASTE AND SPIT ME DOWN A BUNCH OF LITTLE BABY DEMON-BIRD MOUTHS, ARE YA?
SHUT UP, PINK ONE!
CUZ I USED TO HAVE THIS SAME "EARLY BIRD AND I'M THE WORM" NIGHTMARE OVER AND OVER. FOR REAL I DIDN'T SLEEP A WINK MOST OF FIFTH GRADE.
I SAID SHUT UP.
I GET THAT A LOT.
NEVER WORKS.
MY NAME IS KURT WAGNER.
YOU REMIND ME OF MY FATHER.
PREPARE TO DIE!
SHUNK
SHUNK
TICK TICK TICK--
STOP TICKING! WHY ARE YOU TICKING?
YOU'LL SEE.
BOOM
MY FRIEND TABITHA IS MANY THINGS.
SUBTLE IS NOT AMONG THEM.
SHUNK

WHAT THE NUTS, MAN?!
CATCH A GIRL ALREADY!
YOU'RE FALLING QUITE FAST, FRAULEIN--
--WHICH MAKES CATCHING A GIRL--
--MUCH EASIER TO SAY--
...THAN IT IS TO DO.
KA-THUMP
THUMP
THAT >COUGH< WAS THE SUCK.
*
SHUNK
NO, PINK ONE.

THE SUCK HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN.
OUCH...
TRY TO STAY CONSCIOUS A LITTLE WHILE, TABBY.
I NEED YOU TO THANK MY BROTHER FOR ME.
A HALF-DEMON TELEPORTER ALL MY OWN.
JUST LIKE I'VE ALWAYS WANTED.
IT'S NOT EVEN MY BIRTHDAY.
WHAT A GUY, THAT PIOTR.

IF THERE IS ONE GOOD THING ABOUT DEMONS--
TANG
--IT IS THAT YOU CAN CRUSH AND DESTROY THEM WITHOUT REGRET.
NO NEED TO PULL ANY PUNCHES.
SAME THING I ALWAYS LIKED ABOUT ROBOTS. YOU KNOW?
DOM?
GRAGH! GET OFFA MEEEEE...
NEENA?!
NO!
NEENA!

BWOM
WHAT... IN HELL?
WELL, TIN MAN, WE JUST PULLED YOUR BUTTER FROM THE FRYING PAN.
WELCOME TO THE FIRE.
MADELYNE PRYOR--JEAN GREY CLONE AND GOBLIN QUEEN.
ALEX SUMMERS--FORMER X-MAN, CURRENT GOBLIN PRINCE AND QUEEN'S CONCUBINE.
NEXT: FIRE, BRIMSTONE, AND OTHER UGLY THINGS!

MINUTEMEN
Blutman